MARVEL
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DAREDEVIL
THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!
$1.00 US
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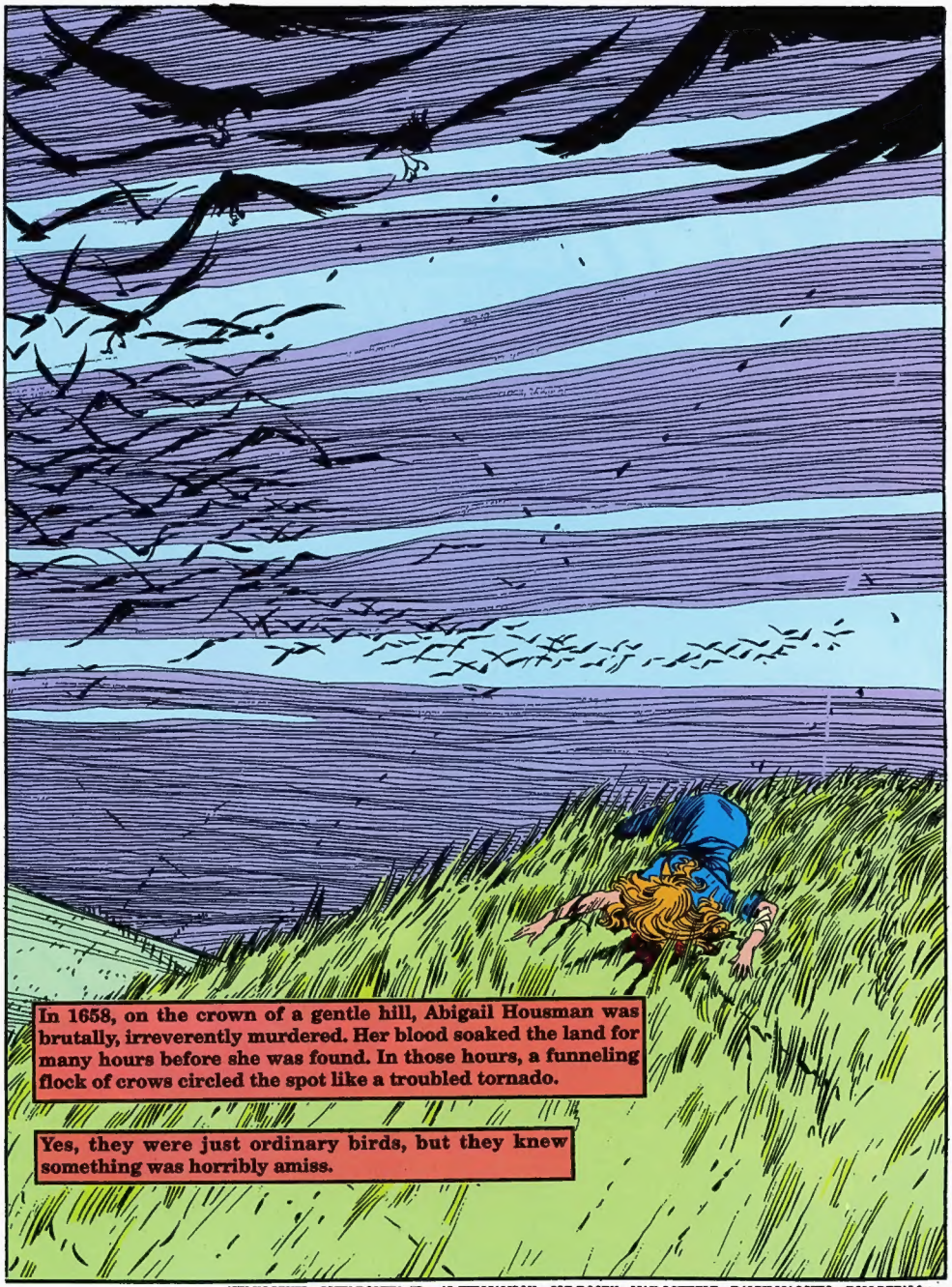
SEPT
02459
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
introducing--the MACABRE MENACE OF BLACKHEART!
GUEST-STARRING: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!
JR. JR. in AW



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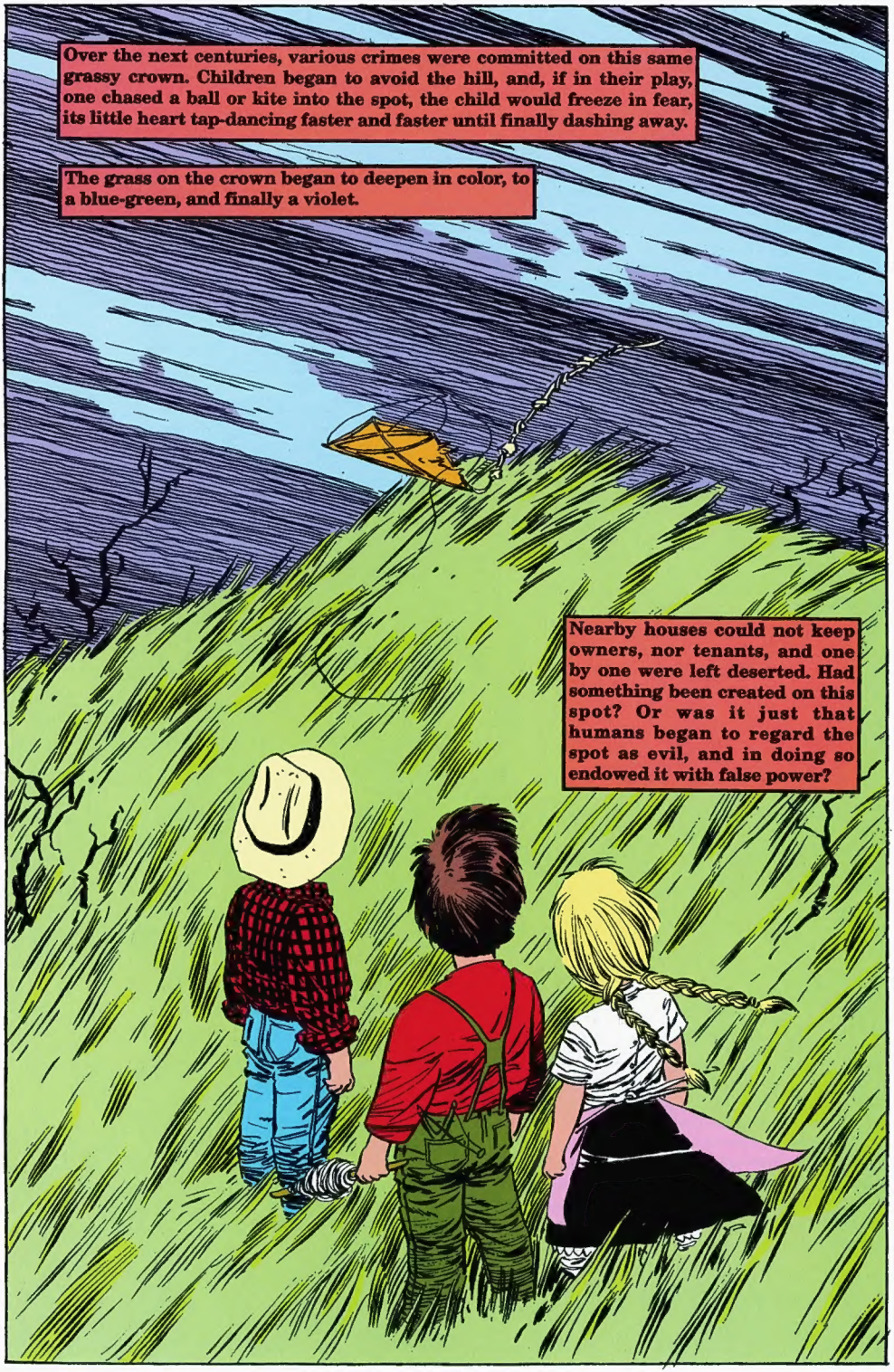
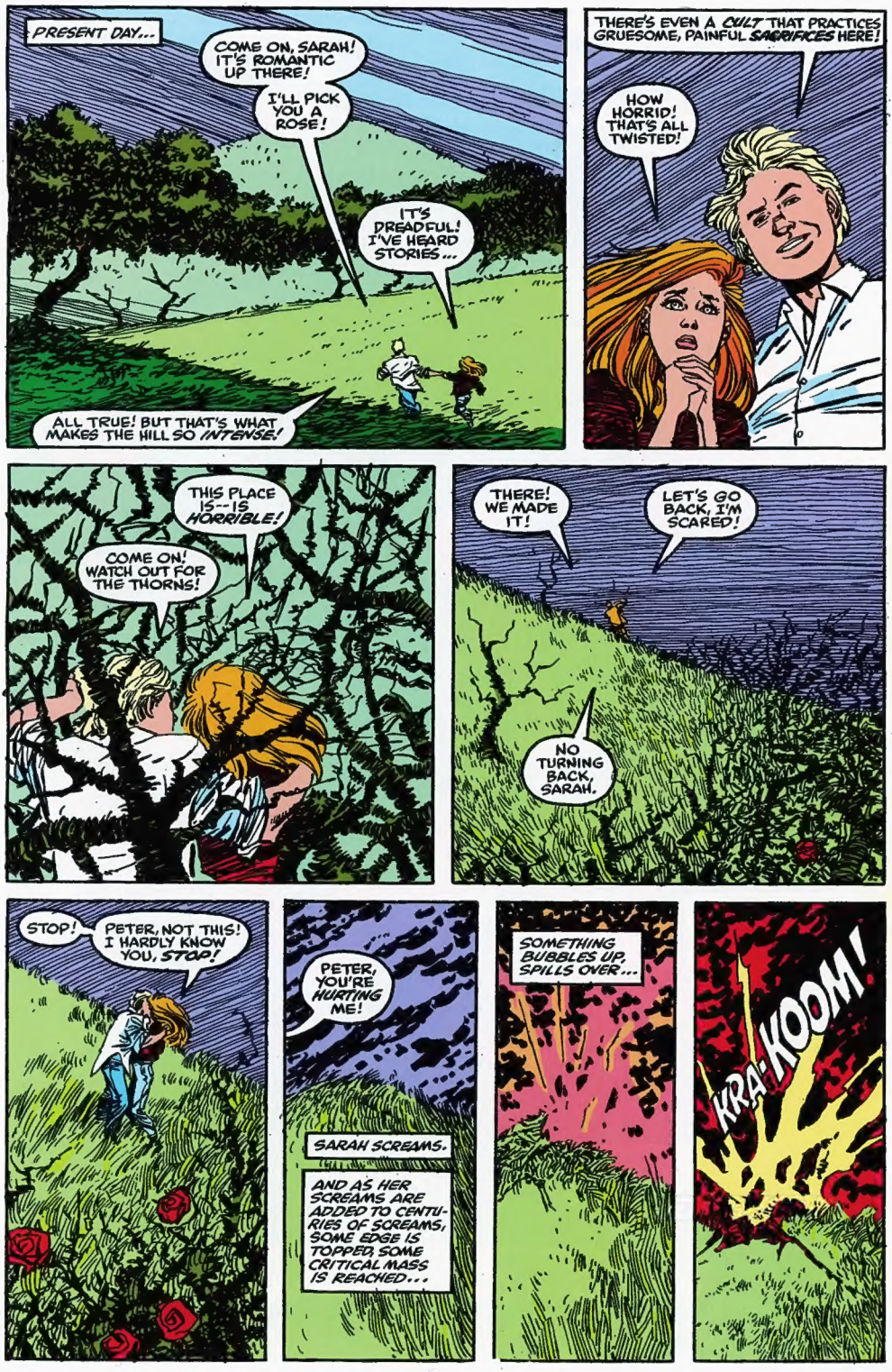
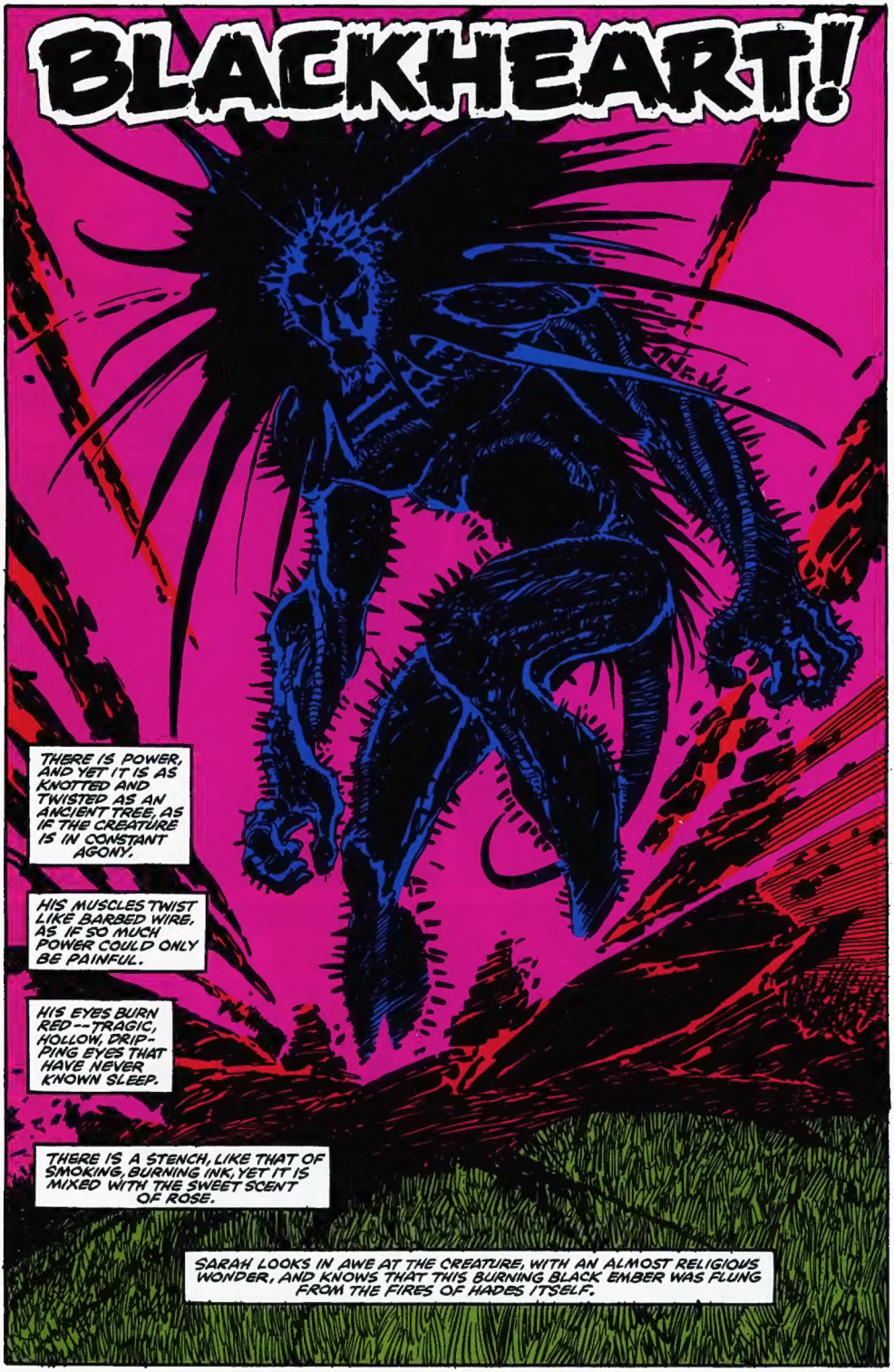
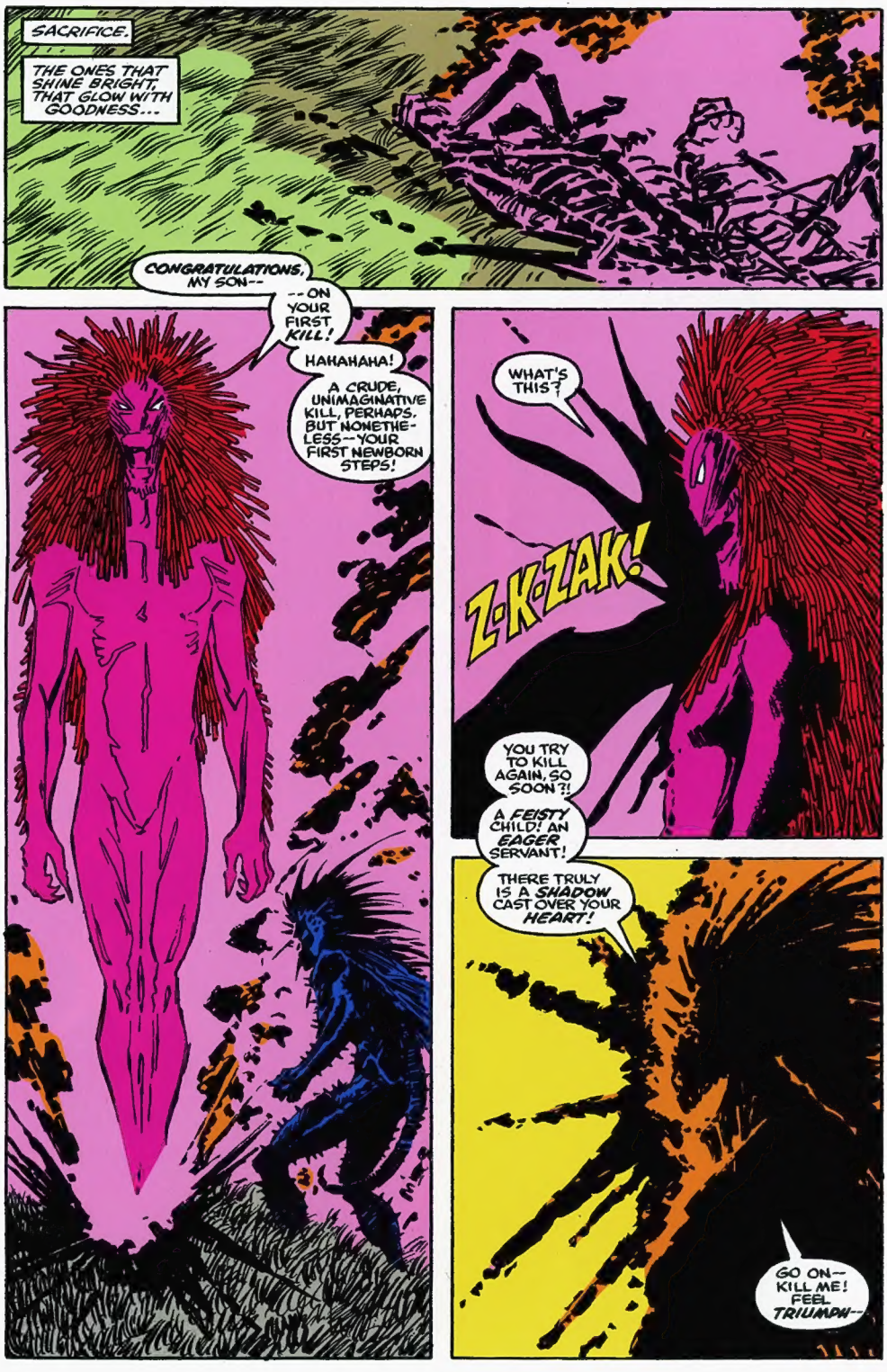

Over the next centuries, various crimes were committed on this same grassy crown. Children began to avoid the hill, and, if in their play, one chased a ball or kite into the spot, the child would freeze in fear, its little heart tap-dancing faster and faster until finally dashing away.
The grass on the crown began to deepen in color, to a blue-green, and finally a violet.
Nearby houses could not keep owners, nor tenants, and one by one were left deserted. Had something been created on this spot? Or was it just that humans began to regard the spot as evil, and in doing so endowed it with false power?

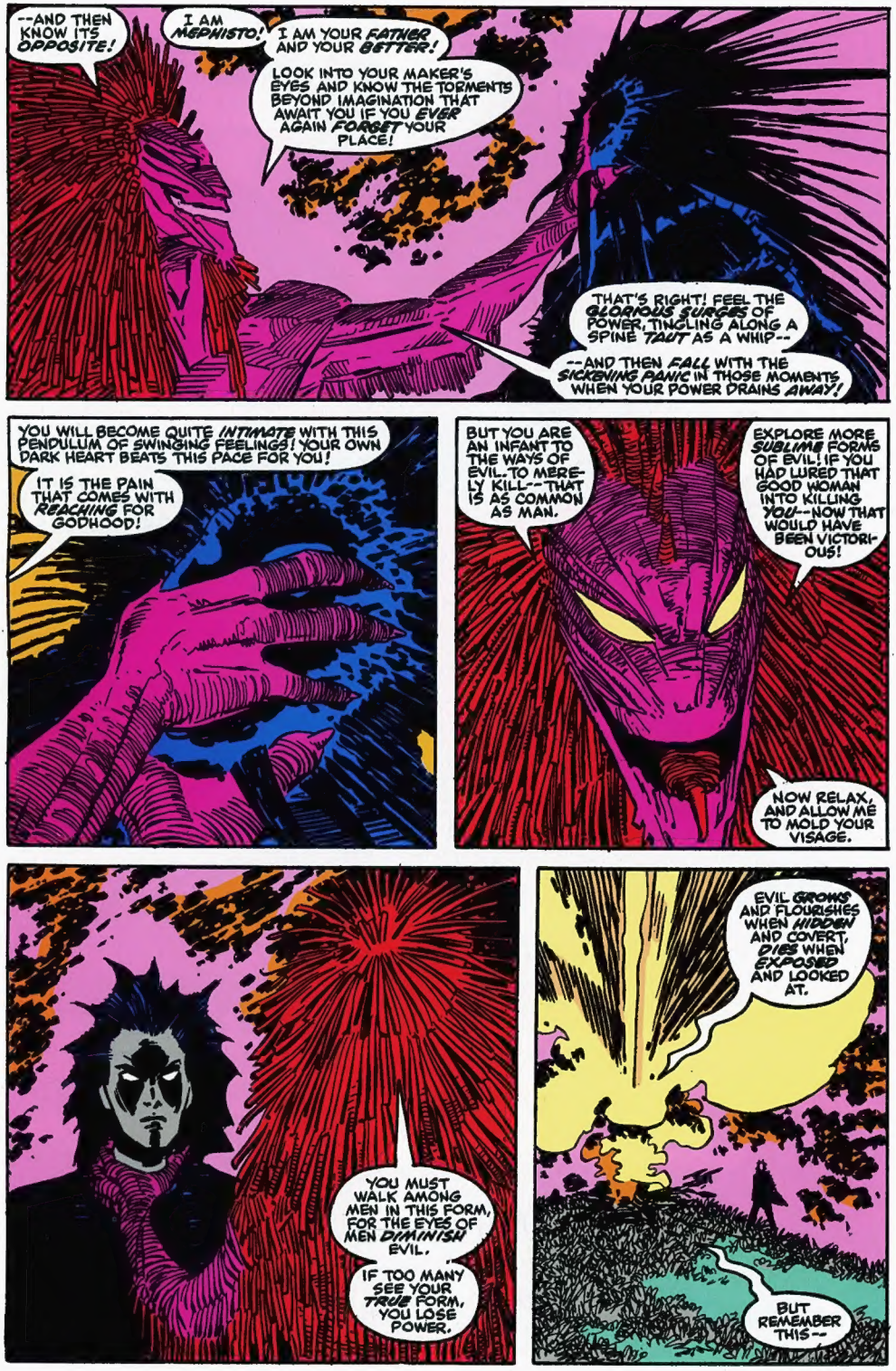
But no matter how, *something* had stirred, had shifted, and it was *not* good. The ground was soaked in blood, the air with screams, and pain seemed to fill even the plants that grew out of the hill.
Strange plants, twisted with a melancholy beauty--romantic, tragic roses with a thousand thorns for every blossom.
The anguished beauty of the place attracted the young, and restless teenagers began to dare one another into nightly visits into the spot. They held seances, or simply held their lovers in their arms...and eventually more tragedies were added to the hill...

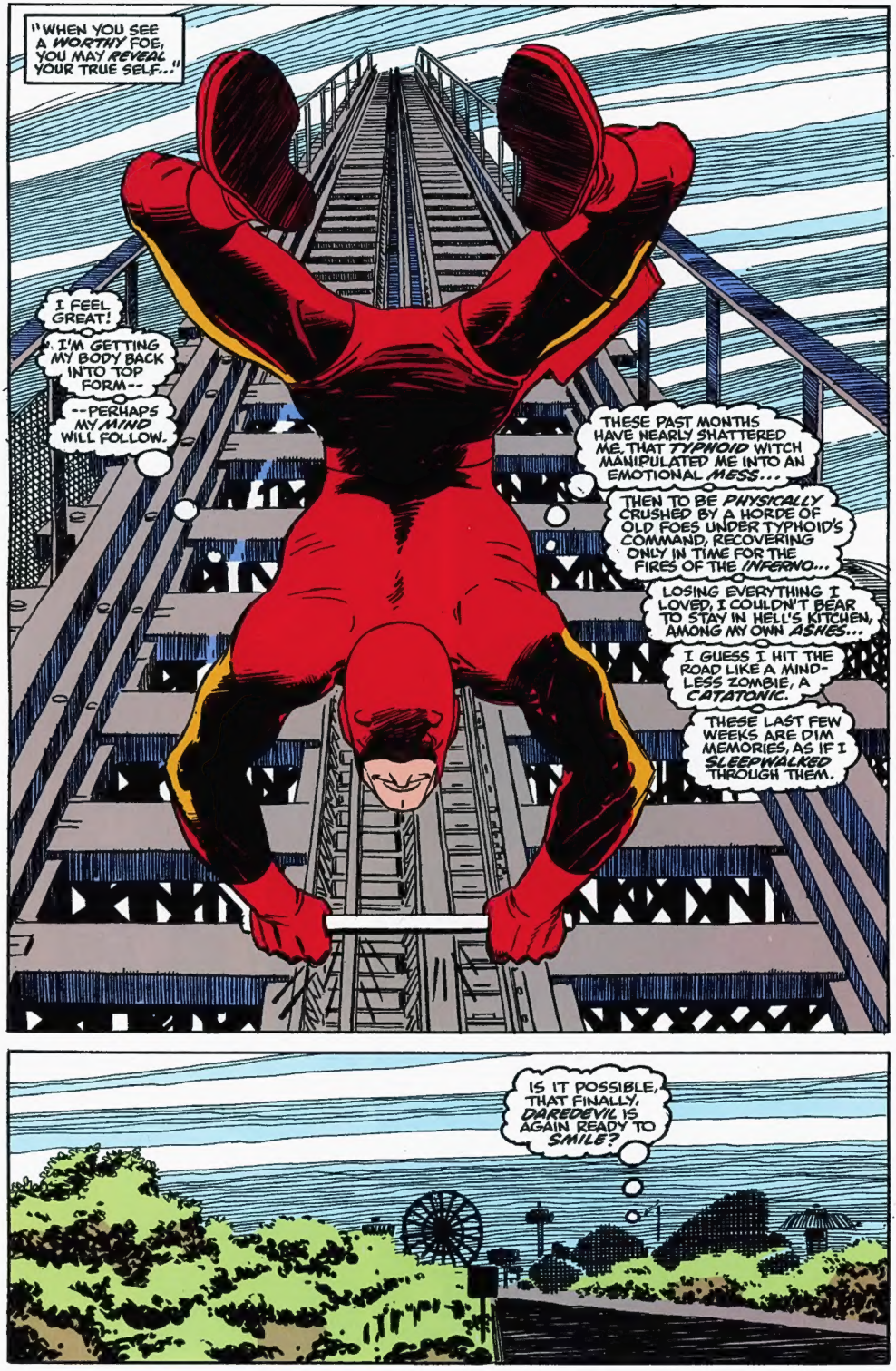

PRESENT DAY...
COME ON, SARAH! IT'S ROMANTIC UP THERE!
I'LL PICK YOU A ROSE!
IT'S DREADFUL! I'VE HEARD STORIES...
ALL TRUE! BUT THAT'S WHAT MAKES THE HILL SO INTENSE!
THERE'S EVEN A CULT THAT PRACTICES GRUESOME, PAINFUL SACRIFICES HERE!
HOW HORRID! THAT'S ALL TWISTED!
THIS PLACE IS--IS HORRIBLE!
COME ON! WATCH OUT FOR THE THORNS!
THERE! WE MADE IT!
LET'S GO BACK, I'M SCARED!
NO TURNING BACK, SARAH.
STOP!
PETER, NOT THIS! I HARDLY KNOW YOU, STOP!
PETER, YOU'RE HURTING ME!
SARAH SCREAMS.
AND AS HER SCREAMS ARE ADDED TO CENTURIES OF SCREAMS, SOME EDGE IS TOPPED, SOME CRITICAL MASS IS REACHED...
SOMETHING BUBBLES UP, SPILLS OVER...
KRA-KOOM!

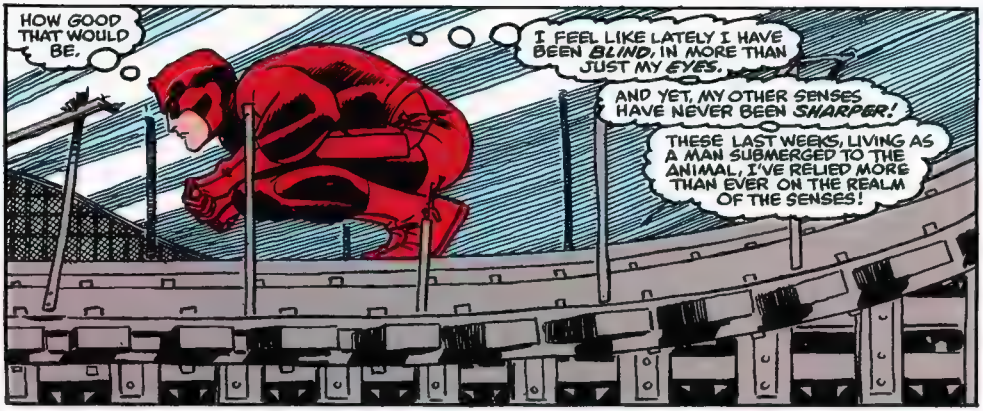

BLACKHEART!
THERE IS POWER, AND YET IT IS AS KNOTTED AND TWISTED AS AN ANCIENT TREE, AS IF THE CREATURE IS IN CONSTANT AGONY.
HIS MUSCLES TWIST LIKE BARBED WIRE, AS IF SO MUCH POWER COULD ONLY BE PAINFUL.
HIS EYES BURN RED--TRAGIC, HOLLOW, DRIPPING EYES THAT HAVE NEVER KNOWN SLEEP.
THERE IS A STENCH, LIKE THAT OF SMOKING, BURNING INK, YET IT IS MIXED WITH THE SWEET SCENT OF ROSE.
SARAH LOOKS IN AWE AT THE CREATURE, WITH AN ALMOST RELIGIOUS WONDER, AND KNOWS THAT THIS BURNING BLACK EMBER WAS FLUNG FROM THE FIRES OF HADES ITSELF.

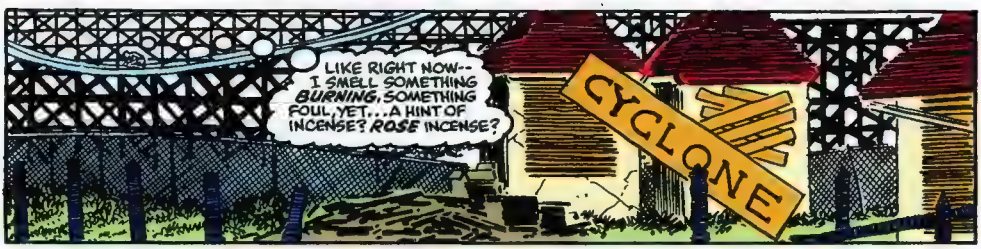
AND THE BLACKHEARTED ONE TURNS ITS BLINDING DARKNESS ON THEM, TO SEE WHO THEY ARE.
THE BOY IS DOOMED, THAT IS CLEAR.
BUT IT SEES THAT THE GIRL IS SPECIAL, IS GOOD. SHE KNOWS WHO HE IS, AND THAT MAKES HIM GLAD.
HE IS HAPPY, AS WHEN A PUPPY FIRST RECOGNIZES ITS OWN NAME BEING SPOKEN, AND FEELS HE IS THE CENTER OF THE WORLD.
THE JOY ALSO SHOWS BLACKHEART WHAT HE MUST DO.
Z-SZ-KZ-ZKRAK!


SACRIFICE.
THE ONES THAT SHINE BRIGHT, THAT GLOW WITH GOODNESS...
CONGRATULATIONS, MY SON--
--ON YOUR FIRST KILL!
HAHAHAHA!
A CRUDE, UNIMAGINATIVE KILL, PERHAPS, BUT NONETHELESS--YOUR FIRST NEWBORN STEPS!
WHAT'S THIS?
Z-K-ZAK!
YOU TRY TO KILL AGAIN, SO SOON?!
A FEISTY CHILD! AN EAGER SERVANT!
THERE TRULY IS A SHADOW CAST OVER YOUR HEART!
GO ON--KILL ME! FEEL TRIUMPH--


--AND THEN KNOW ITS OPPOSITE!
I AM MEPHISTO!
I AM YOUR FATHER AND YOUR BETTER!
LOOK INTO YOUR MAKER'S EYES AND KNOW THE TORMENTS BEYOND IMAGINATION THAT AWAIT YOU IF YOU EVER AGAIN FORGET YOUR PLACE!
THAT'S RIGHT! FEEL THE GLORIOUS SURGES OF POWER, TINGLING ALONG A SPINE TAUT AS A WHIP--
--AND THEN FALL WITH THE SICKENING PANIC IN THOSE MOMENTS WHEN YOUR POWER DRAINS AWAY!
YOU WILL BECOME QUITE INTIMATE WITH THIS PENDULUM OF SWINGING FEELINGS! YOUR OWN DARK HEART BEATS THIS PACE FOR YOU!
IT IS THE PAIN THAT COMES WITH REACHING FOR GODHOOD!
BUT YOU ARE AN INFANT TO THE WAYS OF EVIL..TO MERELY KILL--THAT IS AS COMMON AS MAN.
EXPLORE MORE SUBLIME FORMS OF EVIL! IF YOU HAD LURED THAT GOOD WOMAN INTO KILLING YOU--NOW THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN VICTORIOUS!
NOW RELAX, AND ALLOW ME TO MOLD YOUR VISAGE.
YOU MUST WALK AMONG MEN IN THIS FORM, FOR THE EYES OF MEN DIMINISH EVIL.
IF TOO MANY SEE YOUR TRUE FORM, YOU LOSE POWER.
EVIL GROWS AND FLOURISHES WHEN HIDDEN AND COVERT, DIES WHEN EXPOSED AND LOOKED AT.
BUT REMEMBER THIS--


"WHEN YOU SEE A *WORTHY* FOE, YOU MAY *REVEAL* YOUR TRUE SELF..."
I FEEL GREAT!
I'M GETTING MY BODY BACK INTO TOP FORM--
--PERHAPS MY *MIND* WILL FOLLOW.
THESE PAST MONTHS HAVE NEARLY SHATTERED ME. THAT *TYPHOID* WITCH MANIPULATED ME INTO AN EMOTIONAL *MESS*...
THEN TO BE *PHYSICALLY* CRUSHED BY A HORDE OF OLD FOES UNDER TYPHOID'S COMMAND, RECOVERING ONLY IN TIME FOR THE FIRES OF THE *INFERNO*...
LOSING EVERYTHING I LOVED, I COULDN'T BEAR TO STAY IN HELL'S KITCHEN, AMONG MY OWN *ASHES*...
I GUESS I HIT THE ROAD LIKE A MINDLESS ZOMBIE, A *CATATONIC*.
THESE LAST FEW WEEKS ARE DIM MEMORIES, AS IF I *SLEEPWALKED* THROUGH THEM.
IS IT POSSIBLE, THAT FINALLY, *DAREDEVIL* IS AGAIN READY TO *SMILE*?

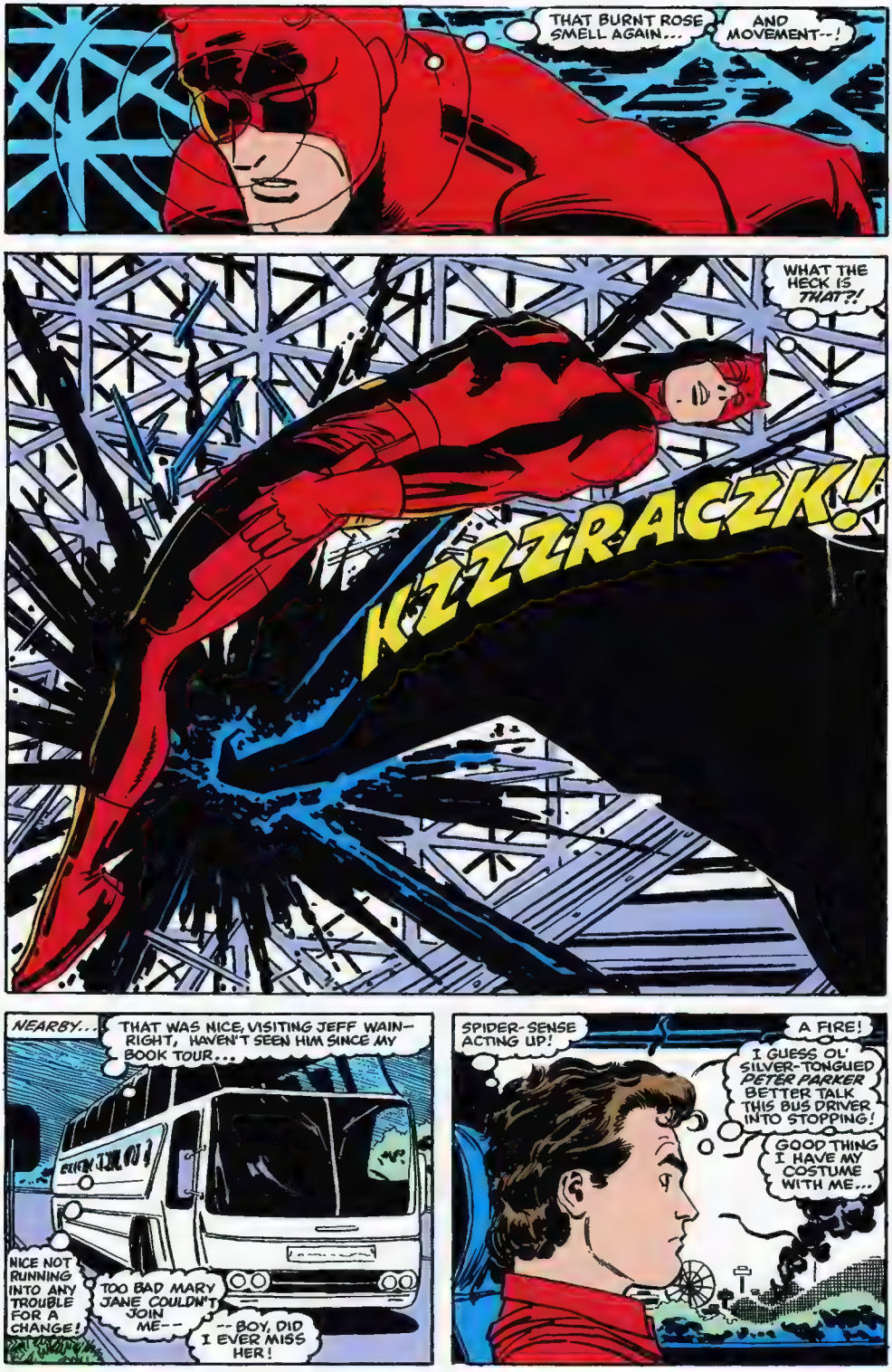

HOW GOOD THAT WOULD BE.
I FEEL LIKE LATELY I HAVE BEEN *BLIND*, IN MORE THAN JUST MY *EYES*.
AND YET, MY OTHER SENSES HAVE NEVER BEEN *SHARPER!*
THESE LAST WEEKS, LIVING AS A MAN SUBMERGED TO THE ANIMAL, I'VE RELIED MORE THAN EVER ON THE REALM OF THE SENSES!


LIKE RIGHT NOW-- I SMELL SOMETHING *BURNING*, SOMETHING FOUL, YET... A HINT OF INCENSE? *ROSE* INCENSE?
CYCLONE

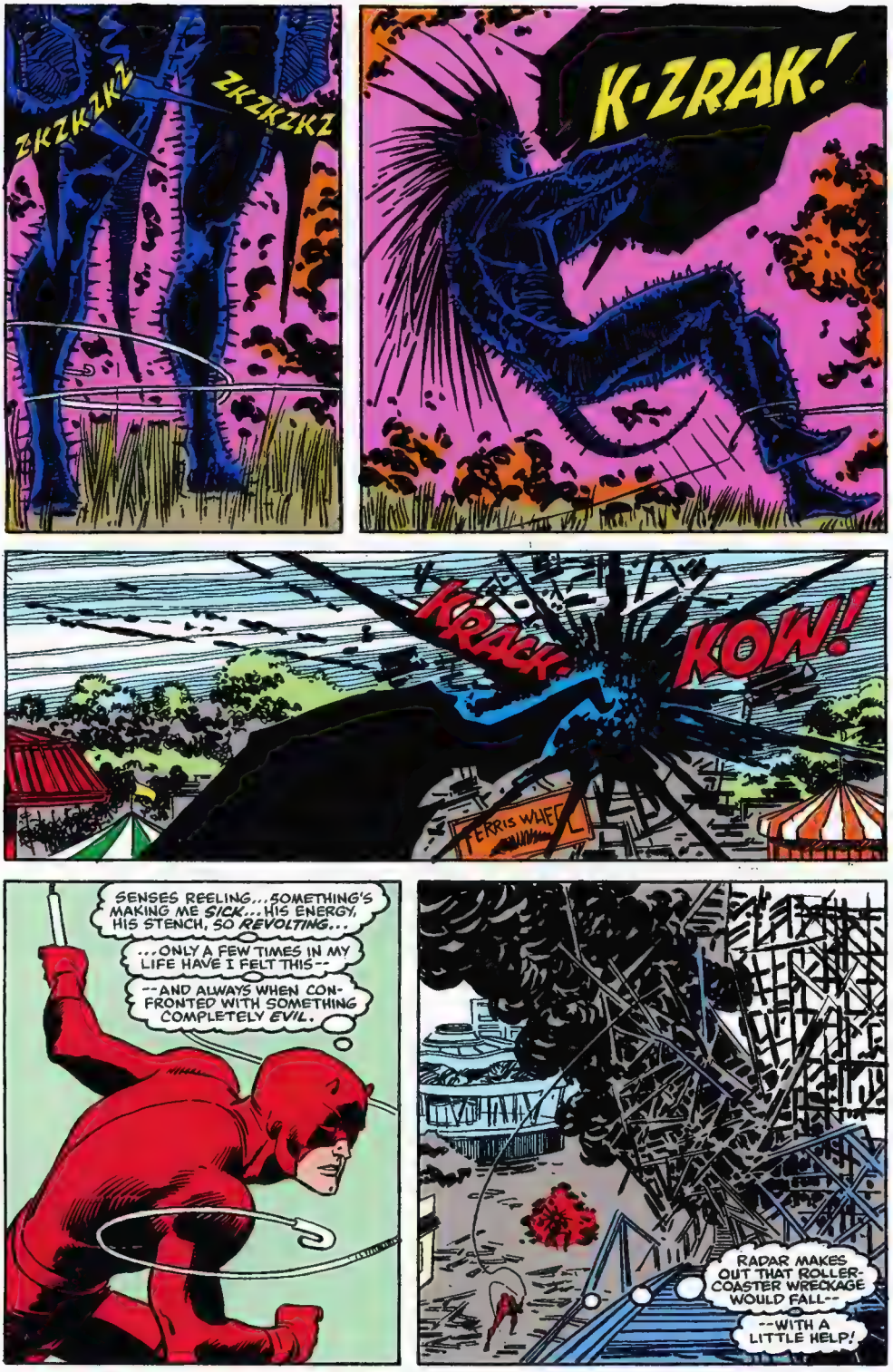
HUH. MY RADAR KEEPS DETECTING MOVEMENT-- YET AS SOON AS I FOCUS ON WHERE, IT'S *GONE!*

LIKE A GHOST IMAGE! WHAT AM I IMAGINING-- WAIT! THERE IT IS AGAIN!
MOVEMENT-- BUT NO HEARTBEAT!

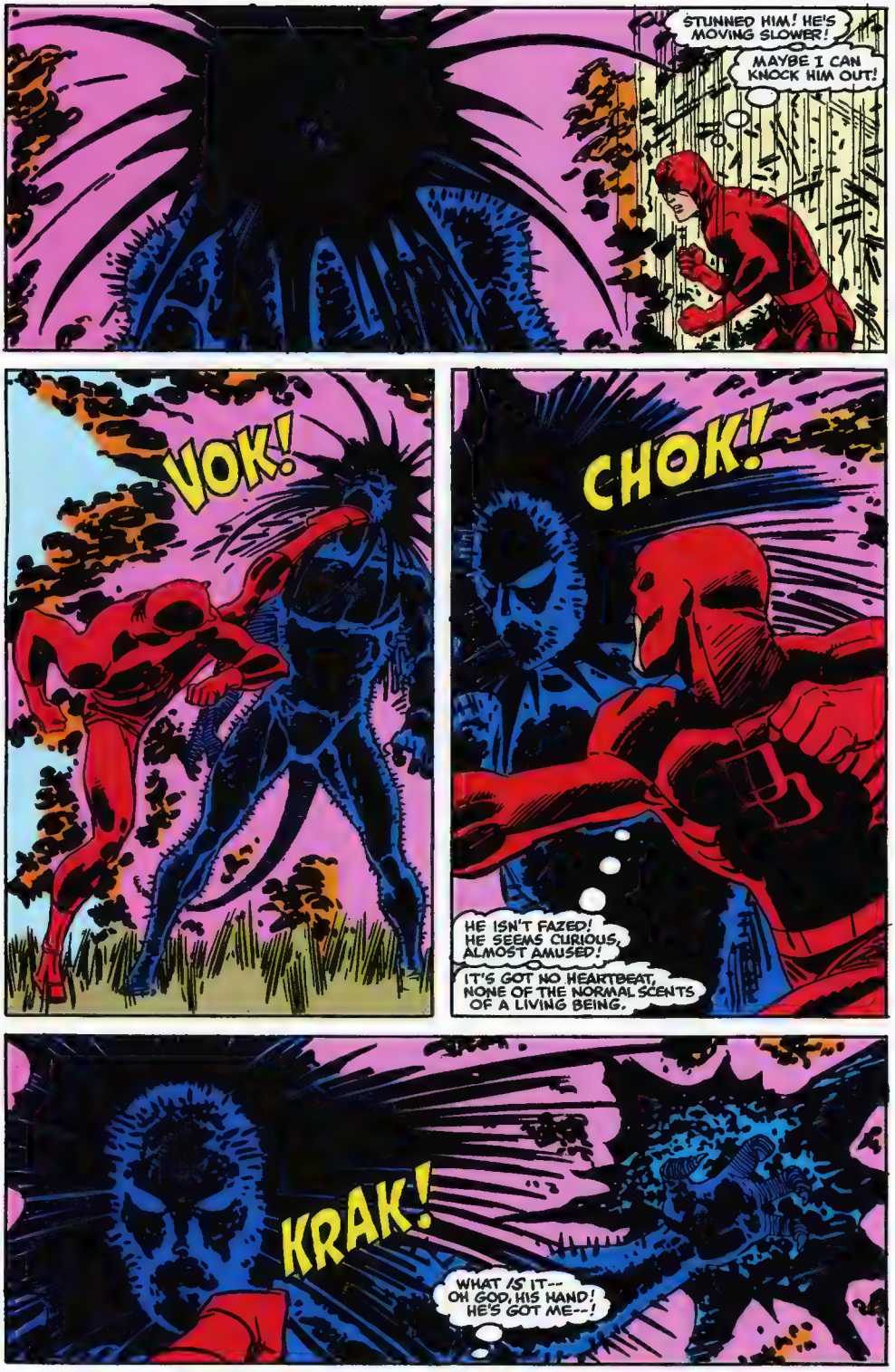
"WHATEVER IT IS, IT ISN'T *ALIVE*."

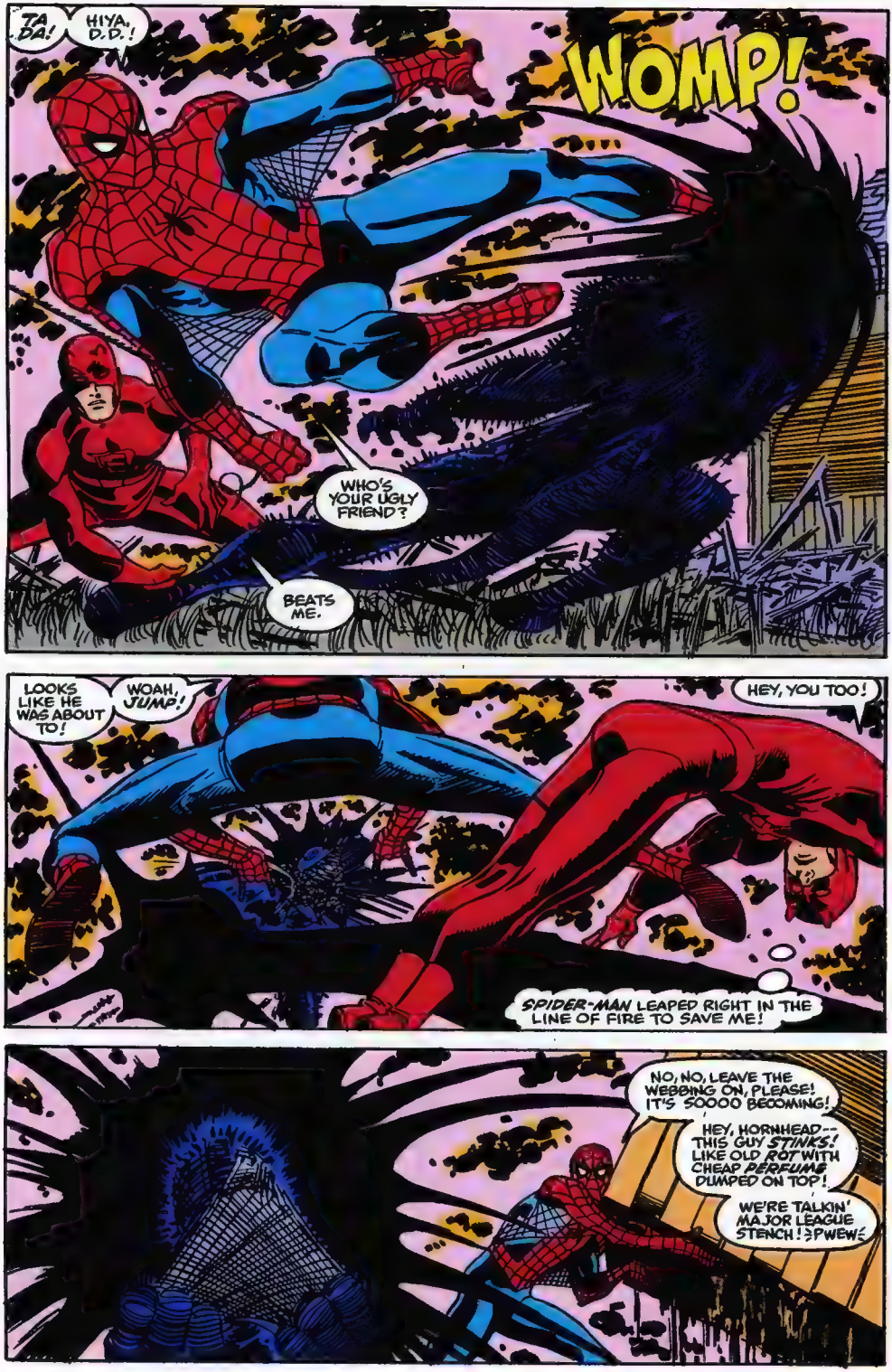

THAT BURNT ROSE SMELL AGAIN...
AND MOVEMENT--!
WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?!
KZZZRACZK!
NEARBY...
THAT WAS NICE, VISITING JEFF WAIN— RIGHT, HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE MY BOOK TOUR...
NICE NOT RUNNING INTO ANY TROUBLE FOR A CHANGE!
TOO BAD MARY JANE COULDN'T JOIN ME--
--BOY, DID I EVER MISS HER!
SPIDER-SENSE ACTING UP!
A FIRE!
I GUESS OL' SILVER-TONGUED PETER PARKER BETTER TALK THIS BUS DRIVER INTO STOPPING!
GOOD THING I HAVE MY COSTUME WITH ME...

HEY!
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?!
ZZRAZRK!
K-ZAK!
K-ZAK!
IT'S TRYING TO KILL ME!
HUMANOID, BUT NOT HUMAN...
RADIATES SOME KIND OF BLACK POWER--IS IT A MUTANT? IS IT MYSTICISM?
ONE THING FOR SURE--IT'S DEADLY, AND BEYOND MY POWERS TO BATTLE DIRECTLY!
I'LL HAVE TO PLAY THE TRICKSTER ON THIS ONE!
ONE DIRECT HIT AND I'M DEAD!

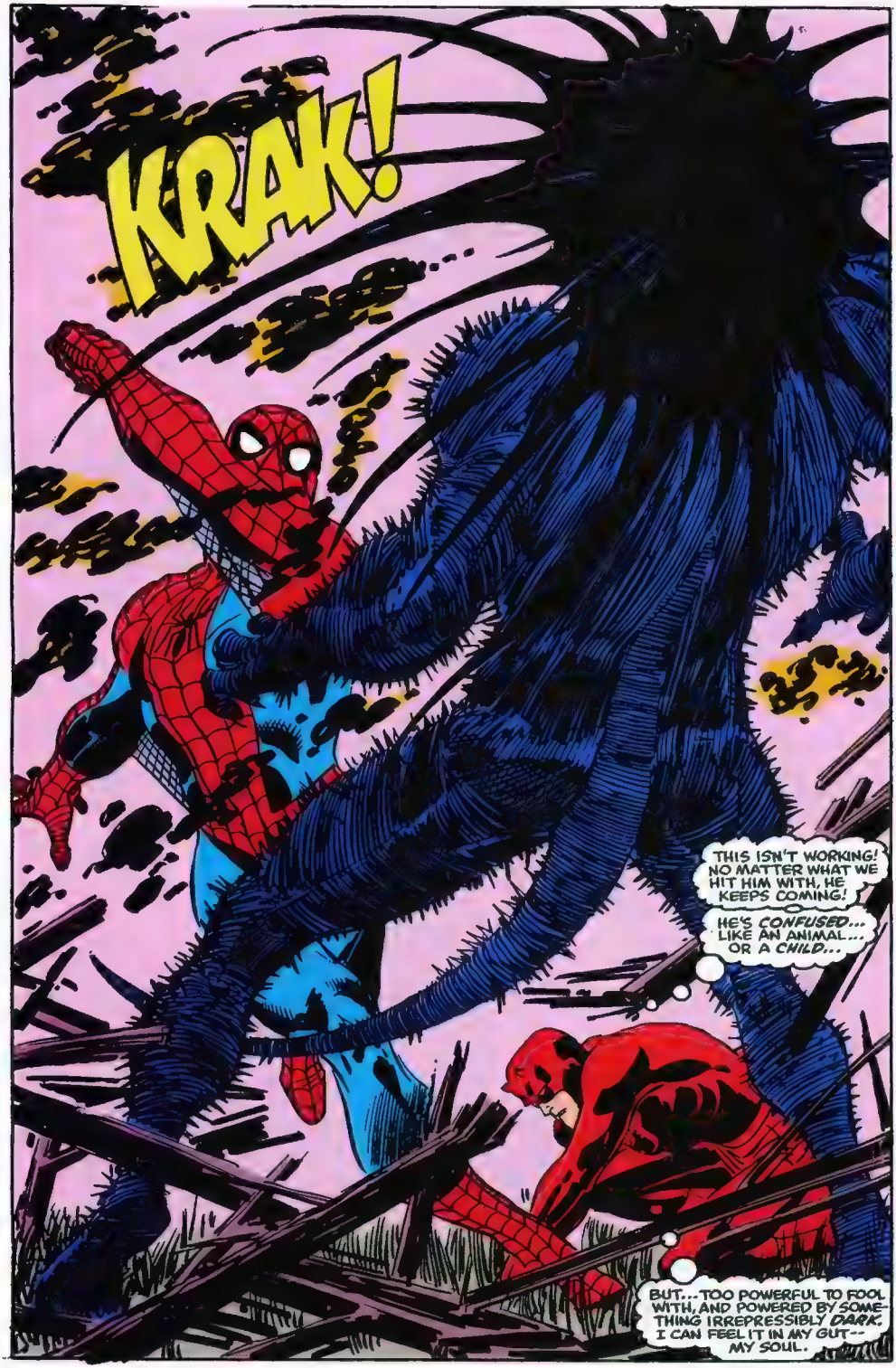

ZKZKZKZ
ZKZKZKZ
K-ZRAK!
KRACK-
KOW!
FERRIS WHEEL
SENSES REELING...SOMETHING'S MAKING ME SICK...HIS ENERGY, HIS STENCH, SO REVOLTING...
...ONLY A FEW TIMES IN MY LIFE HAVE I FELT THIS--
--AND ALWAYS WHEN CONFRONTED WITH SOMETHING COMPLETELY EVIL.
RADAR MAKES OUT THAT ROLLER-COASTER WRECKAGE WOULD FALL--
--WITH A LITTLE HELP!

CRACK-
KRAK
CKRUNCH!
KA-THOOM!
B-KOW!
MY GOD, WHAT IS IT?
SOME KIND OF BATTLE AT THE OLD AMUSEMENT PARK SITE!
WHY AREN'T THE POLICE GOING IN THERE?
THEY DID. THEY WENT IN FOR A LOOK--
--AND CAME BACK, TERRIFIED!


STUNNED HIM! HE'S MOVING SLOWER!
MAYBE I CAN KNOCK HIM OUT!
VOK!
CHOK!
HE ISN'T FAZED! HE SEEMS CURIOUS, ALMOST AMUSED!
IT'S GOT NO HEARTBEAT, NONE OF THE NORMAL SCENTS OF A LIVING BEING.
KRAK!
WHAT IS IT--- OH GOD, HIS HAND! HE'S GOT ME--!


TA DA!
HIYA, D.D.!
WOMP!
WHO'S YOUR UGLY FRIEND?
BEATS ME.
LOOKS LIKE HE WAS ABOUT TO!
WOAH, JUMP!
HEY, YOU TOO!
SPIDER-MAN LEAPED RIGHT IN THE LINE OF FIRE TO SAVE ME!
NO, NO, LEAVE THE WEBBING ON, PLEASE! IT'S SOOOO BECOMING!
HEY, HORNHEAD-- THIS GUY STINKS! LIKE OLD ROT WITH CHEAP PERFUME DUMPED ON TOP!
WE'RE TALKIN' MAJOR LEAGUE STENCH! PWEW!

TIME TO BRING DOWN THE HOUSE, BUNKIE! JUST HOLD THAT POSE! I WANNA REMEMBER YOU THAT WAY!
NO-- SPIDER-MAN!
KA-TOOM!
I TRIED THAT ALREADY--
NOW HE TELLS ME!
--AND IT DIDN'T WORK!
HEY! YOU MOVE PRETTY GOOD FOR A GUY WITHOUT SPIDEY-SPEED! BEEN EATING YOUR WHEATIES, HUH?
ZZ-KRZRK!
HEY, THANKS FOR SAVING ME, BUT YOU COULD'A BOUGHT IT, RED MAN!
YOU... DID THE SAME... FOR ME.
YOU OKAY?
NO... THAT BLAST ROCKED ME HARD...
DON'T WORRY, JUST REST.
THERE'S SOMETHING UP. HE'S RECKLESS! LIKE SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T CARE IF HE LIVES OR DIES!
UH-OH, UGLY'S NOT BLIND ANYMORE!

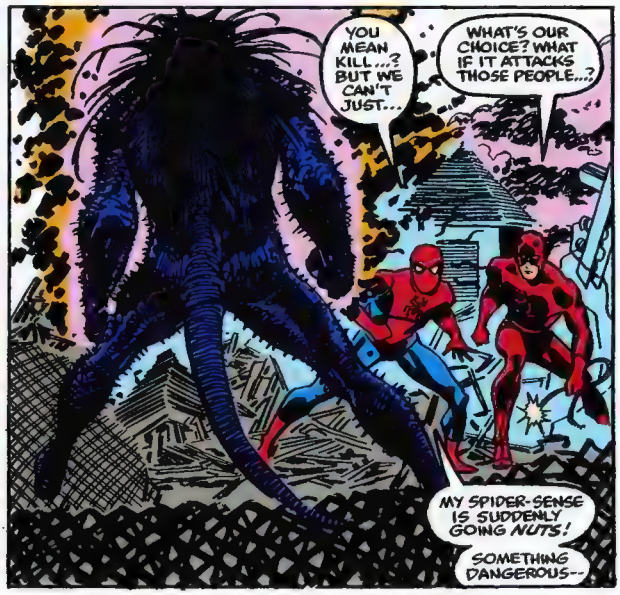

KRAK!
THIS ISN'T WORKING! NO MATTER WHAT WE HIT HIM WITH, HE KEEPS COMING!
HE'S CONFUSED... LIKE AN ANIMAL... OR A CHILD...
BUT... TOO POWERFUL TO FOOL WITH, AND POWERED BY SOMETHING IRREPRESSIBLY DARK. I CAN FEEL IT IN MY GUT-- MY SOUL.

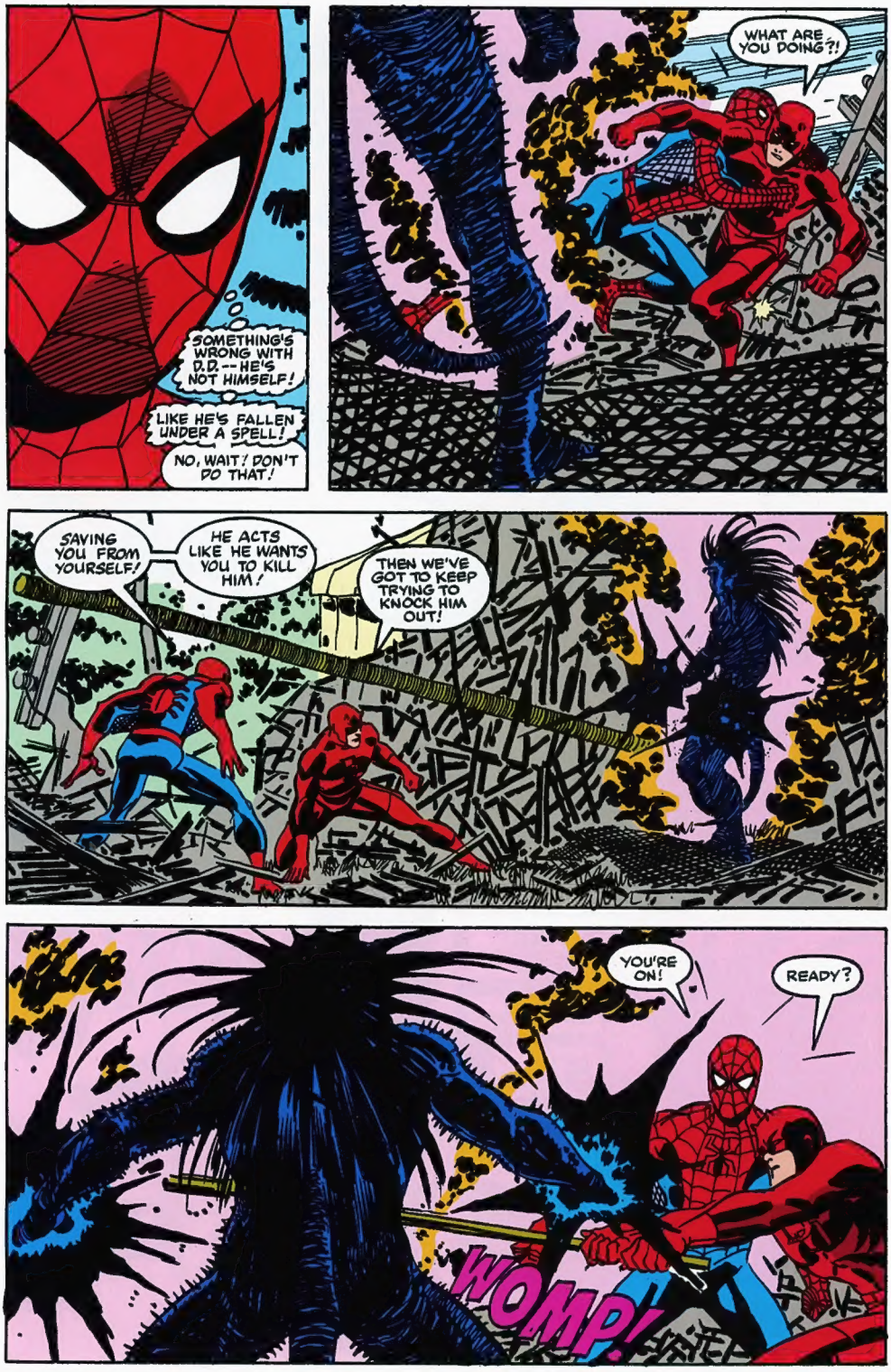
THEY CAN'T BEAT HIM!
THE THING KEEPS LOOKING AT US!
GIVES ME THE SHIVERS!
YEAH, LIKE IT HATES US!
I THINK IT LOOKS SCARED
YEAH, RIGHT.

IT DOES LOOK AT THE PEOPLE.
IT HAS NO TRUE MEMORY, AND YET IT FEELS SOME ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE.
ITS MIND FLICKERS WITH SCENES OF CROWDS...A LONE MISUNDERSTOOD HERO...AND A SACRIFICE.
THERE ARE MOTIONS TO GO THROUGH, STANCES TO TAKE... POSTURES WITH NO MEANING FOR HIM...YET.
IT IS WHAT HE MUST DO. HE MUST MAKE A MOCKERY OF SACRIFICE.

WHY DOES HE PAUSE? WHAT IS IT AFTER?
SPIDER-MAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS THING IS? MAGIC?
I DON'T KNOW DAREDEVIL. I'M GETTING SOME STRANGE VIBES FROM IT. IT AIN'T HUMAN.
NO, BUT MAYBE IT USED TO BE.
WHAT'S THAT CRACKLING? A DOWNED POWERLINE! AND THAT MONSTROSITY'S STANDING ON METAL!

SPIDER-MAN! YOU SEE WHAT I COULD DO?


YOU MEAN KILL...? BUT WE CAN'T JUST...
WHAT'S OUR CHOICE? WHAT IF IT ATTACKS THOSE PEOPLE...?
MY SPIDER-SENSE IS SUDDENLY GOING NUTS!
SOMETHING DANGEROUS--

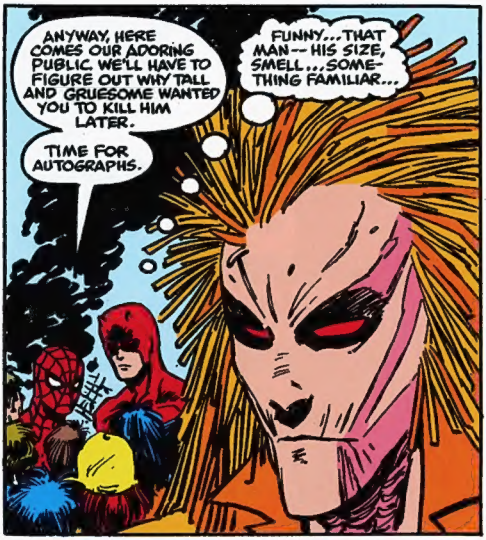

SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH D.D.--HE'S NOT HIMSELF!
LIKE HE'S FALLEN UNDER A SPELL!
NO, WAIT! DON'T DO THAT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
SAVING YOU FROM YOURSELF!
HE ACTS LIKE HE WANTS YOU TO KILL HIM!
THEN WE'VE GOT TO KEEP TRYING TO KNOCK HIM OUT!
YOU'RE ON!
READY?
WOMP!

ZZZZKZZZ!
VOK!
KRAK!
ZZKRZZZ!

THE THING REELS...
AND REMEMBERS THE WORDS... "AVOID THE EYES OF MAN"
AND KNOWS WHY IT IS WEAK...
AND WHY THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT.

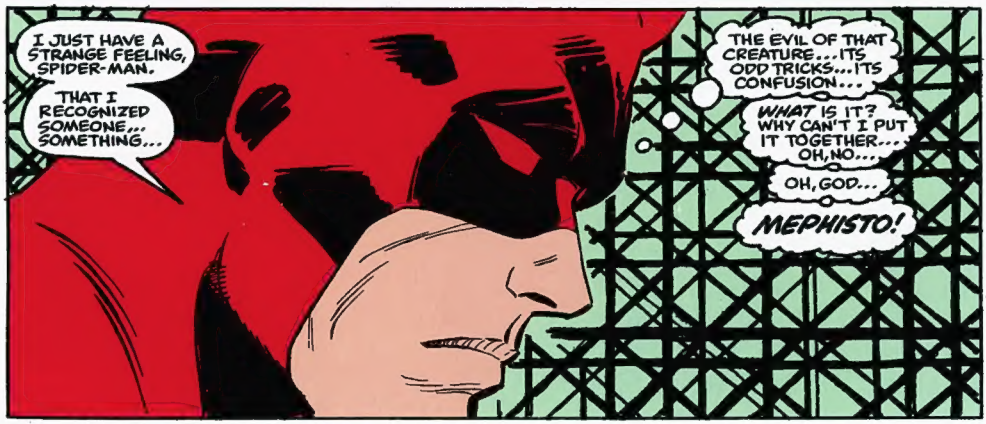
FFOOOM!
BLAST! WE LOST HIM!
AND YOU'RE SORRY ABOUT THAT? SHEESH! WHAT A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT!

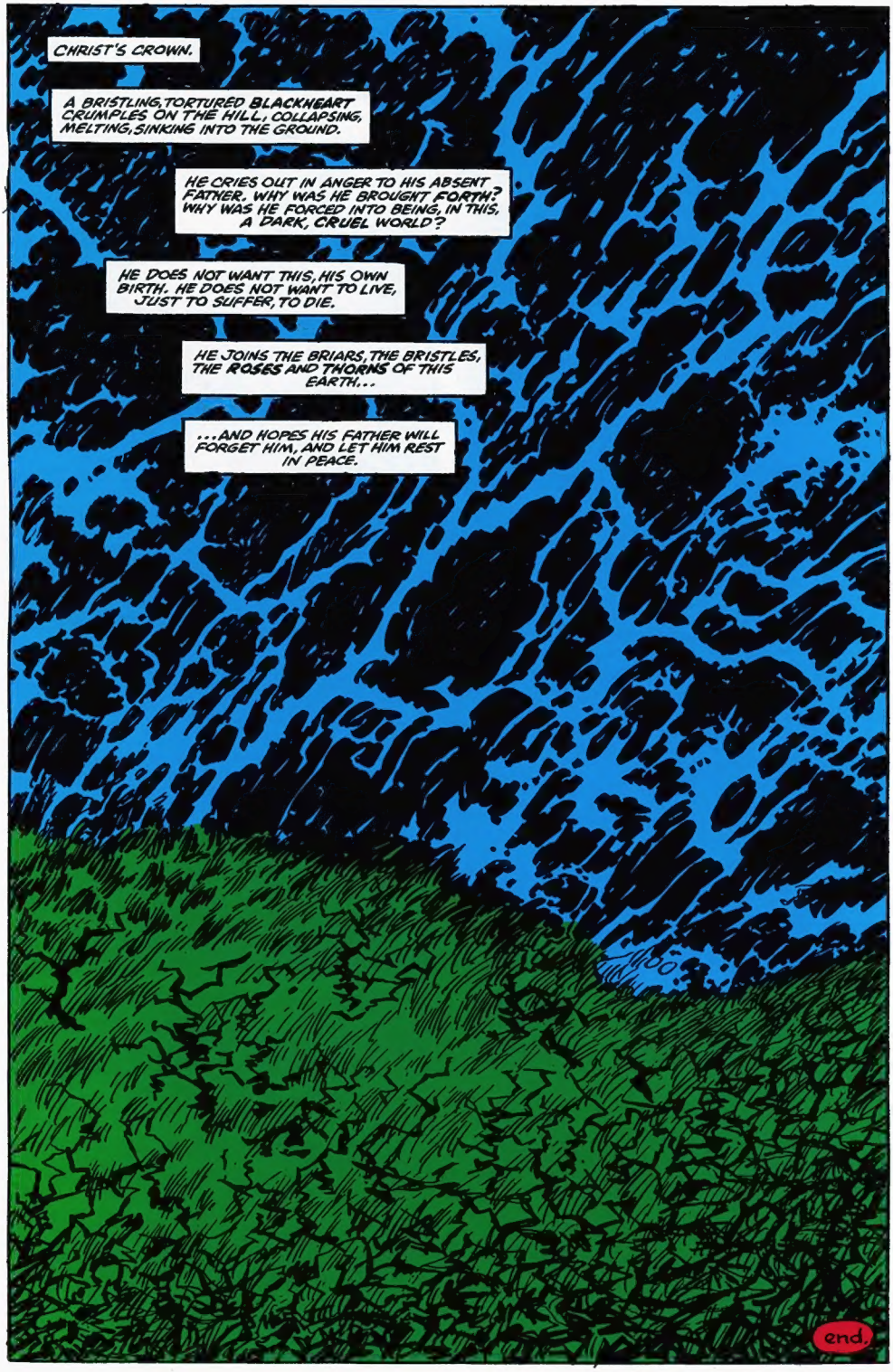
HEY, I'M KIDDING. DON'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF!
BUT HE'S STILL OUT THERE!
THEY'RE ALL STILL OUT THERE, D.D. THAT'S WHAT EVIL'S ALL ABOUT.
BUT WE'RE STILL HERE, TOO. AND THAT'S WHAT KEEPS THE WOLVES FROM THE DOOR.
YEAH.


ANYWAY, HERE COMES OUR ADORING PUBLIC. WE'LL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHY TALL AND GRUESOME WANTED YOU TO KILL HIM LATER.
TIME FOR AUTOGRAPHS.
FUNNY... THAT MAN -- HIS SIZE, SMELL ..SOMETHING FAMILIAR...

YES, DAREDEVIL. WATCH AS I WALK AWAY.
PUT THE PIECES TOGETHER ...GO ON... IT'S ABOUT TO CLICK...
HAHAHAHA! HUMANS ARE SO OPTIMISTIC IT MAKES THEM BLIND TO THE OBVIOUS.

DARN IT! RIGHT AT THE EDGE OF MY MIND!
HEY, DAREDEVIL! QUIT IGNORING YOUR FANS! WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?


I JUST HAVE A STRANGE FEELING, SPIDER-MAN.
THAT I RECOGNIZED SOMEONE... SOMETHING...
THE EVIL OF THAT CREATURE... ITS ODD TRICKS... ITS CONFUSION...
WHAT IS IT? WHY CAN'T I PUT IT TOGETHER... OH, NO...
OH, GOD...
MEPHISTO!


CHRIST'S CROWN.
A BRISTLING, TORTURED BLACKHEART CRUMPLES ON THE HILL, COLLAPSING, MELTING, SINKING INTO THE GROUND.
HE CRIES OUT IN ANGER TO HIS ABSENT FATHER. WHY WAS HE BROUGHT FORTH? WHY WAS HE FORCED INTO BEING, IN THIS, A DARK, CRUEL WORLD?
HE DOES NOT WANT THIS, HIS OWN BIRTH. HE DOES NOT WANT TO LIVE, JUST TO SUFFER, TO DIE.
HE JOINS THE BRIARS, THE BRISTLES, THE ROSES AND THORNS OF THIS EARTH...
...AND HOPES HIS FATHER WILL FORGET HIM, AND LET HIM REST IN PEACE.
end.